

November 8, 2002
AGENDA ITEM # 9

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Authorize CALFED Committee to Prepare Comments on Revised Applications to CALFED for Ecosystem Restoration Grants
(For Commission Action)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the short turnaround for comments, staff recommends the Commission authorize the CALFED Committee to prepare comments on the applications expected in November. Comments will be due before Christmas.

BACKGROUND:

Earlier this year CALFED received 260 applications in October 2001. The projects were reviewed by region, and are currently under administrative and external review and review by technical panels. A Selection Panel made funding recommendations starting a public comment period. The administrative reviews used the following criteria:

- Willing seller
- Consistent with County/City General Plan, or evidence of local government support
- Higher priority for land not mapped as Prime, Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland, or where use remains agriculture
- Ecological criteria; biological richness, connectivity, historic biological importance, unique habitat opportunity in relation to meeting CALFED goals
- Time sensitive acquisition opportunity.

Due to the short review period, the Commission authorized the CALFED Committee to prepare and submit comments on the applications based on the consistency of the selected PSP applications with the Commission's Land Use Plan and Law, and earlier written comments to CALFED re: ecosystem restoration projects.

REVIEW OF REVISED APPLICATIONS:

Several applicants were asked to revise and resubmit their applications based on the comments of the Review Committee. Two projects were submitted in September; the Commission adopted comments on the proposed acquisition of Dutch Slough, Contra Costa County. A group of projects were submitted in October; none of those projects would impact land use in the Delta Primary Zone. CALFED staff expects to receive the following in November (the revised applications are posted on CALFED's web site as they are submitted):

- Aquatic and Wetland Habitat Restoration for the Sun River Property (Wildlands Inc.): 537-acre site in Sacramento County already acquired by non-profit; site within boundaries of Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge; site would be graded to enhance seasonal wetland habitat.
- Big Break and Marsh Creek Water Quality and Habitat Restoration Program (National Heritage Institute): Site already acquired by East Bay Regional Park District; enhance wetland habitat.
- Restoring Ecosystem Integrity in the Northwest Delta, Phase II (Solano Land Trust): Project on publicly owned land (Department of Fish and Game) in Cache Slough watershed.
- Pacific Flyway Center Initial Planning (Yolo Basin Foundation): Project on publicly-owned land (Department of Fish and Game) in Yolo County outside the Yolo Bypass and outside Legal Delta; within newly acquired area; management plan under preparation by Department of Fish and Game.